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There are cultural differences in the children of the economically deprived in the United States. Art education can help these children deal with their environment.

Examples of ethnic diversity are given in reports on the characteristics of Spanish speaking people (Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos), Negroes, and American Indians. Each of these segments of the population has certain traits which would be noticeable in the artistic values and predilections of their children; art educators should learn about the varying cultural factors and how to accommodate them in the art curriculum. An example would be the futility of trying to teach a Spanish child to conform to American standards of subdued, mixed colors when his artistic heritage demands the brilliant use of full intensity colors.

Suggestions for improving art education for deprived children are given. Art teachers should help the children maintain their past culture and create art work that has personal meaning. Children should be helped to improve their environments not only through aesthetic and cultural means, but also through order, cleanliness, and good sanitation practices. Development of creative abilities would provide constructive new ways for these children to break out of the limitations imposed on them, ways in which to seek out remote possibilities, new ways to see their present situation, and ways to tolerate a great deal of failure as a means of finding a workable outlet for their abilities. The teacher should understand and respect the art influence in the childrens' backgrounds to help them develop a sense of individual worth. The children should be made increasingly independent from mass media so that the distortions of certain advertising directed toward the affluent society do not make them feel more rejected and deprived.

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Art For The Economically and Socially Deprived

Dr. June King McFee

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Art For The Economically and Socially Deprived

June King McFee

I. Introduction

The present drastic changes in the mobility and numbers of peoples in American society concerns art education as imperatively as it concerns all education. The population increases so pronounced among the low income groups, the increase in economic status of peoples still denied social equality, occurs while mass media pressures for the achievement of status and "happiness" through materialistic acquisition. These factors in combination contribute to a volatile situation among those who face social rejection and economic privation. The rejection of deprived people's children by the same society that makes them go to school, to prepare for a life they are not encouraged to enter, increases hostility and withdrawal. This paper is based on the assumption that appropriate education can help these people to improve the quality of their experience and that art education has a particularly important role to play. Some dimensions of the problem will be explored and some procedures for handling it suggested.

II. The Role of Art Education for Deprived Children and Youth

Art education for citizens in a democracy should be based upon a curriculum that is sufficiently wide ranging to be useful for all students. It should prepare people to make aesthetic discriminations in the production, consumption, and use of their products. This includes development and renewal of cities, housing, and the artistic symbols found in the environment of daily life. Understanding and discrimination in the visual arts are necessary because in a democracy the qualities of the environment can be improved, or allowed to decay, depending upon the knowledge and interest of the electorate.

The children of the economically and socially deprived have particular needs to be met if they are to be prepared for full citizenship. They come to the classroom with varied attitudes and values that must be considered if their aesthetic potentials are to be developed. They need to learn the discriminations and skills necessary for improving their environment. They need to gain confidence in their own ability to make aesthetic judgments somewhat independent of their inherited environment or the dictates of mass media.

A. The Underprivileged Minorities

This is not an amorphous mass but are a vast and complex segment of society. Many of these people are not economically deprived but are socially rejected; some are accepted socially but cannot participate because of low incomes; others are both economically and socially deprived.

1. The Major Groups. This category includes:

- much of the Spanish speaking population from the Phillippines, Mexico, and Puerto Rico,
- many of the underpriviledged rural white people who have moved to the city.
- educated middle class Negroes who still bear the burden of social rejection.
- the lower class Negroes who lack both income and acceptance,
- some segments of the pre 1900 immigrant population who, in spite of three or four generations experience have not been able to emerge from the old city ghettos,
- many American Indians, either on or off reservations, who do not yet participate fully in the national economy,
- the migrant workers who are inadequately housed, underfed, and poorly educated.

2. Demographic Trends. Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz estimates that

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there are 11, 000, 000 children and youth who come from families with less than $3,000 annual income.[1] These young people will be entering the labor market, with the rest of the post World War II birth rate increase, at a time when automation is decreasing the ratio of jobs to population. They tend to go into the semi-skilled and labor positions which are decreasing in demand. The competition will be increasingly great for relatively fewer positions. That some of these people may experience further difficulty is shown by figures indicating that since 1955 the rate of increased unemployment among Negro adolescents has been twice as high as among white youth, whether they have high school diplomas or not.[2] These trends indicate that the chances of these students moving out of the underpriviledged group are decreasing rather than increasing.

3. Urban Immigration. The new minorities are rapidly moving into the centers of the cities replacing the old 19th century immigrant centers. At present 90% of northern Negroes and 73% of the national Negro population live in cities. The ratio of non-white to white population in the Northeast is 95 to 80%, 95 to 65% in the North Central. In the South they are equal. In the West 79% Negro and 78% white live in cities where the greates rate of population increase is going on.[3]

Many of these people move from villages and rural areas where social controls are maintained by kinsmen and other well known persons; to the city where strange and impersonal public agents, city police, landlords, school principals are the authorities.[4] This leads to misunderstandings and conflicts in values. The new urban immigrant must create a "home" in strange surroundings. Thus a major need of these people, both for their own adaptation and for the benefit of the community they enter is learning how to live in cities. Their adaptation is complicated because the cities themselves are in states of some what disorganized change and growth.[5]

4. Value Conflicts. Conflict in values and the meaning of symbols takes place when lower class children, Negro or white, enter a middle class school.[6] Children from differing cultural backgrounds, as well, have additional conflicts to resolve. The Puerto Rican child has at least three cultural systems with which to deal: the rural Puerto Rican of his parents, the urban lower class of his new home, and the middle class educational system. Teachers who do not understand these value conflicts often misinterpret behavior, fail to stimulate the child to learn and may increase the gap of misunderstanding.

Art teachers often introduce still another set of values. Most children in American culture, deprived or not, who have been exposed only to the "popular arts" will experience value conflicts when they are encouraged to increase their sensitivity to the fine arts and crafts. The deprived child may have to learn as many as four different kinds of symbols: the symbols of this ethnic background, his social class, mass media, and those of the fine arts and crafts.

It is difficult for us as teachers to recognize the intensity of commitment to certain symbols that are deeply rooted in the value systems of these children. A startling reminder of the persistence of culture was found at the 1963 Master Works of Mexican Art Exhibit at the Los Angeles County Museum. The staff reported that flowers and hand-made figurines were left as offerings in front of the colossol preclassic male head displayed in front of the museum. To find such evidence of devotion to an ancient Mexican deity in modern Los Angeles seems amazing, but it is not so surprising when one understands that some Mexican-Americans come from Indian tribes which have had little or no exposure to any forms of Christianity, or having been exposed, preserve and maintain both the original and the Christian value systems.[7]

In order to help children and youth use the symbols from their backgrounds to amplify and extend their daily use, educators must understand the background

and diversity of values even in what may appear to be homogeneous groups.

B. Implications for Art Education

We in art education can help by searching our field to note the kinds of behaviors and learnings we can encourage that might be helpful to these people. To the greatest possible degree, we must become aware of the diversity of cultural backgrounds and attendant values and attitudes of the different segments of the deprived, in order to find the means with which to meet this challenge. Only suggestions of the diversity found in the different groups can be made within the limitations of one chapter. The Spanish-speaking groups, the Negro, the American Indian will be considered as examples of ethnic diversity. Any one teacher, any school and regional art-teacher education department must study their own particular population to identify the kinds of economic or cultural deprivation represented in their schools. This is necessary to establish the appropriate goals and means of implementation.

III. Examples of Ethnic Intra-Group Variation

A. The Spanish-Speaking Peoples

The people who comprise this group come mainly from the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. The recently arrived Cuban migrants are not included in this discussion as they represent a wide cross section of social classes. The Filipino population is concentrated on the West Coast, the Mexican in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas, and the Puerto Ricans in New York and other East Coast cities. They differ widely in cultural backgrounds even though they have Spanish names and speak the same language.

Burma, in his study of the Spanish-speaking groups, found that they face minority discriminations much like the Negro. They are not welcome in some housing areas, definitely have not had equality before the law, are restricted

in their uses of recreation centers and public services such as restaurants and beauty parlors.[8] Educators need to recognize the diverse backgrounds of the Spanish-speaking peoples, their attitudes towards "Anglo" culture which has developed in part from the treatment they have received as minority persons, and the degree to which their sub-society gives an integrated and cohesive support to the individual in his way of life.

1. The Mexican-American. Spanish-speaking children in the West and South West who are called Mexican or Spanish Americans range from those of Mexican Indian background, only remotely touched by the Colonial Mexican Period, to the descendants of Spanish colonials who have little or no Indian background. Some children come from Spanish-speaking homes but refuse to speak Spanish themselves. They usually are working for assimilation into "Anglo" (white) culture. Others know little English and for them going to school demands a distinct cross-cultural shift.

Holland, who has studied the IQ performance of different groups of these children, finds that the large percentage of Mexican-Americans are in a middle range group. They are bi-cultural and bi-lingual. They participate in both cultures and "Have no well defined position in either American or Mexican society."[9] They are ranked in the lowest soci-economic status of society. Many of the children have low verbal skill in either Spanish or English and this is a distinct hindrance to academic achievement.[10] Schools who do not consider their separation from society and contribute to their rejection.

2. Puerto Ricans and Filipinos. These populations, though smaller in number than the Mexican Americans present still different problems. The Puerto Ricans are racially ambiguous. They tend not to fit into either the white or Negro segments of society, yet they are of both races. They differ because of

peoples they are ill fitted for living in urban areas. They are the easy prey of those who live off the ignorance of others, Their concentration in some of the worst slum areas of big cities makes their plight as difficult as any segment of the other minority groups.[ii]

The Filipino, by contrast, tends to have a strong in-group organization. Many of the families have white mothers and grandmothers due to the longstanding ban against the immigration of Filipino women. A closely knit social system and a proliferation of mutual aid societies are found in cities where there are concentrations of these people. This writer, while a consultant to a California school district, found that the administration was unaware of the highly structured Filipino society. The teachers tended to stereotype these children with the Mexican-American students. Yet here was a distinct social group which could be studied in order to make the education of their children more meaningful.

3. Questions for Art Educators. The assumption is often made by artist that art is a universal language and so no cross-cultural conflicts exist. What happens to the Mexican American, the Puerto Rican, or Filipino child who is told to refine his brilliant use of full intensity color to better approximate American art standards? What meaning does a request for self-expression have for a child who lives in a closely-knit extended family where self direction and expression have not been encouraged, where art forms and patterns already are well defined for him by family and ethnic standards? These are some of the many questions the classroom teacher needs answered to enable him to reach the different segments of the Mexican-American population. The child who is just beginning to become acculturated may be encouraged by using Mexican art forms. In other cases children and youth who are rejecting their ethnic backgrounds and making extreme efforts to become accepted in the dominant society may be affronted by using the language and art forms from their families' culture.

B. The American Negro

Negroes, of the largest minority group and possessing physical characteristics that contribute to easy stereotyping, is as diversified in economic background, in values, and in cultures as the general white population. The Mexican-American and the American Indian have background cultures from which they may achieve a sense of identity. The Negro in large part has lost the continuity of his culture. The ancestors of the American Negro were taken from their tribal grups and mixed with other Negroes from other tribes and cultures. Prior patterns of social behavior, including marriage, religious belief and ritual, and well established patterns of status achievement were denied them. In America the Negro had slavery status, marriage and family were often disrupted for economic ends, and a new religious was taught them. On the hundred years since "emancipation" American Negroes have moved from this condition in greatly varying degrees.

1. Economic Status. Robert Weaver, Administrator of the United States Housing and Home Finance Agency, estimates that half of the Negro population is impoverished according to American standards. In 1959 the mean family income of Negroes was less than 55% of that for whites. At the other extreme there are 6,000 Negroes who make over $25,000 a year. In between these extremes of poverty and wealth is one third of the Negro population that has acceptable or better standards of living.[12] This group includes the doctors, lawyers, social workers, government employees, ministers, and social workers. Many of these people are working with Negro youth to help them learn the necessary responsibility for self-improvement.

2. Effects of Discrimination. Each of these groups respond to discrimination in somewhat different ways.[13] Little study has been made of the differences among Negroes raised in the West, the Deep South, Middle West, and

Eastern Seaboard. Though all experience discrimination to some degree they vary in social acceptance, degree of ingroup stability, and educational opportunity.

Clark, in his study of race prejudice, found a relationship between the darkness of a Negro child's skin and his self concept. Whether or not he was asSouthern or Northern Negro child was also important. The Northern children appeared to have more anxieties about their color than those from the South. Clark suggests that this may be explained because the Southern Negro child has been taught to accept his social rejection as normal, while the Northern Negro child rejects his status and more conflict is involved.[14] Middle class Negro children, particularly girls, are often more strictly taught to conform to the highest middle class standards of dress and behavior in rejection of the stereotype of the undisciplined Negro.[15]

3. Implications for Art Education. Each of these segments require different kinds of education in order that what is presented to them will have meaning. The middle class Negro child differs little from other middle class children. Their strict childhood training may make them anxious to conform, but they may be more willing to learn to use art as a means of improving the quality of their environment and experience. Lower class Negro children lack the cultural symbolism of the Mexican-American or Indian child. Their religion, though rich in music, has few visual symbols. The teacher would have to identify these children's strongest values and find ways to make art contribute to their attainment of some of these values. Clark feels that all rejected people have some degree of self-hatred.[16] Perhaps in some degree this can be changed to self-respect through success and acceptance of their artistic productions.

In a conference with professors of art and art education at Florida

Agricultural and Mechanical University the writer found many dimensions to the question of how best to reach Negro youth. Some of the professors felt that art training should be so exacting that students could compete equally with the best white artists. Others felt that the students might gain a sense of worth through studying African art. One man questioned this view because he felt that the ties between Africa and the American Negro are remote and impersonal. Another felt that the Negro child should be taught that there are many ethnic streams that join in the making of American culture; and the Negro, through his adaptation to the national society, has been one of the very important contributors to the whole. All agreed that the greatest task was to help the lower class Negro child, who is taught by society to believe that his is inferior, to develop sufficient self-respect and use of his potential so he may help change this attitude of the larger society.

C. The American Indian

It is estimated that there are over half a million Indians living in the United States today, half of whom are still on reservations. The estimated total has doubled between 1920 and 1960. These figures are only an approximation because of differing definitions of what degree of Indian background makes one an Indian, the fluctuating on and off reservation population and the difficulties of counting Indians in remote areas. The important point is that this minority group is increasing rapidly and gaining in cohesion as a national force.[17]

1. Indian Education. One of the most difficult problems of the Indian has been the constantly shifting policies of the United States Government. At one time the policy was to take Indian youth away from their parents where they were taught the white man's ways. Now both reservation and public schools are being used in an attempt to improve Indian education and to reach all Indian children.[18] However, the equality and kind of education varies greatly from

reservation to reservation and even among the schools on any one reservation. Variations in educational opportunity and inconsistency in policy contribute to the Indian's low economic status.[19]

2. Indian Art. Indian art has been preserved in some areas and distorted for trade in others. In some cases the adaptations have not decreased the quality of the art forms. On many reservations there is evidence of a resurgence of dancing, ritual, and art forms as a means of preserving Indian identity. At some periods either government agents or missionaries refused to let the Indian culture be expressed in art forms.[20] Now arts and crafts in some form or other is encouraged.[21]

3. Implications for Art Education. Though a strong Pan Indian movement is growing much of the cultural diversity among the various Indian groups remains.[22] Personnel in any school that has Indian students will need to understand that past culture of the groups and the degrees to which students adhere to the Indian-oriented or more white-oriented cultures. The Indian like the Apanish-American child may not be motivated by reference to the old culture if he is moving out of his old social environment. If he is an active participant in the old, or if he has been rejected by white society to a point that he has returned to the reservation and the more Indian-oriented segments of the reservation, then an opportunity to use art to enhance his involvement in the old culture will tend to have meaning for him.

IV. Art For The Deprived Minorities

A. Tentative Objectives

Objectives need continued re-evaluation as more information about populations is obtained. The present state of knowledge about these peoples is too tenuous and too changing for any objectives to be constantly effective.

The following objectives are posited by the writer as possibilities in improving art education for the children and youth from these groups; some of the ways experience in art mightmake a contribution in the solving of this very serious and explosive social problem.

1. Preserving Cultural Meaning. Many of the deprived people who are uprooted, separated from the art forms, however meager, of their prior homes. Art teachers who recognize this can help these children maintain their past culture and create for their homes symbols that have meaning, that tell them who they are and what is important. It is a means of opening communication between the parents and children in cases where the parents have rejected the school because it has tended to separate their children from the old values and attitudes. This is particularly true for many of the American Indian and Spanish speaking groups where ties to the old culture are often strong.

2. Improving the Environment. Filth, drabness, and ugliness can be controlled if people know how, are aware of the possibilities, can learn the effects that some degree of order, cleanliness, and design can have on their existence. Many middle class concepts, such as the importance of a table where everyone can sit down at once to eat, a place for everyone to sleep at the same time, running water, enough chairs or couches so everyone can sit down are inadequate for analysis of this problem. We must think of ways to help in the context of the daily experience of many of the economically deprived, where people take turns sleeping and eating, where children are told to go out and stay out of trouble because there just isn't room for them at that time. These are not cultural differences, but differences imposed by poverty.

People carry with them the habits of living they learned in either rural or urban poverty when they move into urban renewal districts which can soon become slums unless re-education takes place.[23] We need to help those who still

live in slums and those in housing redevelopments to want to continue to improve when they have learned that there are more satisfying ways to live. The improvement of aesthetic and cultural qualities as well as sanitation and upkeep need to be stressed.

3. Developing Creative Abilities. The development of creative potential is often heralded as necessary for the leaders in society, but is a need for the deprived as well. Development of these capacities will provide constructive new ways to break out of the limitations imposed on them, ways in which to seek out remote possibilities, to see their present situation from a different point of view, to tolerate a great deal of failure as a means of finding a workable outlet for their abilities. Improvisation, extension, elaboration in what appear to be impossible situations are needed. In some ways art programs can develop these kinds of behaviors. Teachers can give students alternatives and help them evaluate their choices, can encourage them to make trials even when they may fail to achieve what they desire. If the problems in art are directly related to their own lives, they have more chance of transferring these abilities, learned in art, to their own life problems. Part of creative education includes helping children see how creative abilities have broad application and use.

The development of the creative potential needs careful adaptation with different cultural and economic groups. In some situations self-direction has not been encouraged, in others survival depends on aggression. In both cases the work, at first, may have to be quite structured while allowing for alternatives. Those students lacking self-motivation may need to gain confidence before being put on their own, those who are hostile may need more control so that their energies may be directed. The primary factor in helping hostile students may be the teachers' attitudes toward them. Long standing social rejection may not be ameliorated by one teacher's acceptance but it may be a

beginning.

4. Developing a Sense of Individual Worth. The ways in which self esteem is learned are difficult to identify.[24] Children raised in an environment of poverty when the affluence of others is so visible, who are told by many subtle cues that the color of their skin, their language, their behavior, or their names makes them inferior, have little opportunity to recognize their own human worth. Many art teachers report having watched such a child gain in self respect when he produced things in art that gave him a sense of accomplishment. The successes seemed to tell him that, in spite of all society said, he could create something of value. It would seem that art teachers who respect and understand deprived children, who respect the art influences in their background have more potential for helping such children gain a sense of personal worth, than those who reject either the child or his art.

5. Increasing Independence from Mass Media. This generation of underprivileged boys had more opportunity to know of things beyond their way of life than any previous group has ever had. In speaking of the advancement of communication on a world wide basis Paul Hoffman identifies "rising expectation" as ". . one of the most powerful forces affecting the future of mankind." He cautions that one face of the movement is a desire for progress which we must help or we will have the ". . . . other face turned upon us. This is the ugly face of violence and even chaos, born from hopeless frustration and despair. . . ."[25]

Jules Henry, an anthropologist, looking at the 12 billion dollar American advertising business, shows the distortion of American values that is used to prime the pump of the affluent society.[26] We can imagine what the glamour glitter and psychological appeal of these distortions mean to the children who are rejected or impoverished.

B. Questions for Art Educators

We as art educators need to ask ourselves. Are there discriminating abilities in design, which we could help these children achieve, that would help them see through the subtle communication of mass media? Will learning that design in packaging is used to influence them make them aware of its effect? Will learning that there are other important functions of design in constructive advertising, that good design is not necessarily dependent on expense, that they themselves can be designers, help them be more independent in their response to mass media?Can we provide these children with alternative goals, through exposure to varieties of well designed products within their economic reach?

The question for the educator becomes less what style or taste can I teach, but what awareness can I help students develop? What is there in the background of these particular children or youth that I can build upon to help them help themselves through art? How can I help them create an environment that has meaning, that is pleasant and comforting? What interactions in design would help them make order and interest out of chaos and neglect? How can I help them, in terms of their past experience either develop or direct their creative potential? How can I present what I know about art without bias and in concrete enough forms to increase their visual sensitivity and aesthetic discrimination.

V. Implementation

The problems of teaching art to children from deprived areas cannot be dealtwith just by varying the subject matter. An awareness of individual differences and methods of motivation is not enough unless a very vigorous effort is made to understand the children's social environment where their values and attitudes are learned. The following is a report of an exploratory

attempt to use materials from the social sciences to help improve the art curriculum in a changing metropolitan center. The participants in the study were most of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade special art teachers, their Art Consultant, Miss Betty Richards of Phoenix, Arizona School District Number One, and the writer acting as in-service teacher. The study was exploratory, a beginning attempt to understand a radically changing social situation. It is presented, not as a definite study, but rather a possible means of working toward the goals of better education for economically and socially underprivileged children.

A. Identification of Problem Areas

As the class discussed these problems it became evident that the teachers who frequently were having difficulty in motivating and reaching students were often those with excellent training in art but who had had little training in either elementary education or in working with deprived children. This recognition motivated the group to search for more understanding of the problem. We began by listing possible factors that might explain this difficulty. Many of the teachers worked under difficult time allotments, meeting classes in one or more buildings for one or two periods of 50 minutes or less a week. It was almost impossible to develop concern for individual differences under these circumstances. The immediate task was to learn as much as possible about the children as a whole, and the major sub-groups, in order to arrange art activities that would be meaningful for the large majority of each class.

B. Gathering Data

1. "Group Case Studies" To further explore this problem each teacher selected one of his classes to use for a "group case study". As much information

as possible about the members of the class, i.e., the number of persons living in each home, whether one or both parents were in residence, the degree of family mobility, ethnic background, the languages spoken in the home,and, if possible, descriptions of the work patterns of adults. The mean and range of IQ and scholastic aptitude tests were obtained for each class.

2. Use of Questionnaire. A questionnaire was prepared in an attempt to get information that might contribute to understanding these students' values and attitudes and to get some clues about how they used their time. The limitations of the questionnaire were recognized. It needs considerable refinement and revision, but it was a useful inital probe into an area that requires immediate attention.

3. Census Information. The census information for the more deprived tracts within the school district is shown in Table 1. It can be noted that the percentage of home ownership is low. In most cases low educational levels and dilapidated housing are found in the same tract. In one case this is not born out, but the area includes a housing development, for low income families. The high percentage of the adult population, over 25 years of age who had either no schooling or had not finished the eighth grade was unexpectedly high. This kind of information was particularly helpful to the teachers. It gave them new insights into the problems of students who seemed to have so little understanding of what education might do for them.

The data showed that while the district varied rather widely in socio-economic levels the economically and socially deprived made up the largest proportion of the school population. The teaching difficulties seemed to center in the schools where the children from these segments were most numerous.

Integration of these schools was begun in 1951, but was not completed until 1955. Some geographic segregation still exists. At the time integration

was effected it was reported that the relationship among minority groups was "good" but there was some evidence that the Mexican-Americans tended to look down on the Negroes.

4. Ethnic Population of the Deprived Area. The following compilation of figures are those reported for the single class studied by each teacher, but but are suggestive of the composition of the whole population. Of this sample of 287 children in eight classes from the poorest districts - 62.7% were of Mexican origin, 25% were Negro, 11% were white, and 1% Filipino, 3% Chinese, and 7% Indian. The Mexican population ranged from predominantly Spanish to mainly Indian ancestry and included some who were part Anglo and few who were part Negro. Of the 26 Mexican children in one class all but one were bilingual.

This does not mean that all people from these ethnic backgrounds are underprivileged, Many Mexican-Americans are well educated and economically secure. Some are business, professional, and civic leaders. These do not experience the prejudice met by the less privileged MMexican-Americans. Middle class Negroes have a more difficult experience. It is harder for them to get better housing and overcome social prejudice.

These problems of ethnic and economic minorities exist in a city that has lavish tourist and entertainment centers, where extensive upper and middle class housing is expaning rapidly outside the core area and luxury apartments and office building construction increasingly is replacing older homes and apartments within this core.

C. Summary of Data

When the questionnaire and the census data for the lower economic part of the district was summarized it gave the teachers the following information.

1. Most of the students' leisure time was spent in passive entertainment,

Table 1

1960 Census Data on Low Income Tracts*, **

Tract Number	Total Population	No. Housing Units	% owner occupied	% Dilapidated	Schooling - % Pop. over 25 years						% non-white	Median education	No. in household
					0	1-4	5-7	8	HS 1-3	HS grad			
83	6,610	2,888	30.3	40.1	2.5	7.03	12.7	21.6	20.5	21.6	6.6	9.9	2.47
84	3.516	1,502	16.7	73	9.1	14.8	19.6	19.7	16.5	12.3	55.2	8.3	2.44
92	5,636	1,806	47	43.7	10.1	14.5	24.5	18.41	19.7	8.2	56.2	8.1	3.32
94	3.007	819	34	82.1	23.5	24.4	23.7	14	7.9	5.6	12.8	5.3	3.75
95	5,863	1,579	52.6	51.6	11.8	21	26	19	13.6	6.2	4.8	7	3.91
93	7,543	1,820	28	11.6*	11.6	18.8	24	18	13.2	8.2	39.9	7.4	4.24

* Based on 25% sample.

** Adapted from materials prepared from U.S. Census, 1960 by Phoenix Public Schools District

television, movies, and talking. Cartoons; humor, crime, and western television and movies were most frequently watched. These responses were obtained through answers to open-ended questions, such as "On Saturdays and Sundays I like to...." and "When we are all home we.....".

2. Response to questions about why they did or did not like school gave little to indicate that these children had any idea as to why they were in school.

3. Students checked those values in a list that they considered most important. Over 60% preferred "be happy", "work hard", "Use your head", "help others." "Do what the family wants," "work in groups," "work when it is quiet," "use your feelings and enjoy life," were checked by 45-50% of the students. "Going on your own," "working alone," and "being handsome and beautiful" were checked by 30-35% of them. The attributes checked least were "getting ahead of others", 26%, and "working when it is noisy," 6%. Though this only suggests what they may value it is interesting to note that getting ahead of others and working alone were checked by less than one third of the students. Yet these are characteristics inherently rewarded by competitive grading in our middle class educational system.

4. The most frequent responses to the questions "What does art mean to you?" and "What do artists do?" were "pictures" and "making pictures" and "having fun". There were few references to beauty, or to design or art qualities.

5. Mainly conceptual responses were made to the question "What is the most beautiful thing you know?" Only 3.4% of the students described the quality of the object names, such as "a soft beautiful flower," "and icy cold stream in a forest" and "a clean orderly house and neat clean children." Unqualified categories of nature such as trees, flowers, forests were the most common with 18% of the responses. Girls were next with 10% and religious art following with 8%.

The overall picture presented by these materials suggested some new criteria with which to establish overall objectives. Now the teachers had a basis for comparing their particular classes to others in the area. This helped them identify variations in attitude and values among the different deprived groups. It also helped them relate ethnographic and sociological studies of these different ethnic groups to similar conditions in their own classes.

D. Formulation of Educational Directives

After careful analysis of the available information certain broad similarities among the groups were noted which led to the formulation of the following educational directives for adaptation to classes in which any of these subgroups predominated.

1. The use of non-school time by these students indicated that they had done little creative construction or manipulation. They need to learn that there are satisfactions to be derived from these activities and that their own constructing and creating could contribute to the enrichment of their way of life.

2. They apparently need to be taught directly, by some real experience, <u>why</u> they are in school and what art can do to help them live a more satisfying life now.

3. Art might have more meaning for them if they could learn it in already familiar ways. The usual emphasis in art classes upon self-direction, self-expression, and individual work may have little meaning to children who spend most of their time in passive activities and who value highly working in groups. The stress on uniqueness may deter the ultimate creative development of some of these students by putting them in strange situations before they are prepared for them.

4. The students' conceptions of art need expanding to include all forms of art as expressed in shelter, clothing, communication, and religion. Their own uses of art to communicate, such as age and sex in dress, can be made explicit. This awareness can be expanded into other ways in which art forms communicate. Examples of familiar architecture, even thoug allowed to become run down, can be used to help students become aware of the uses of art in providing shelter. Appreciation could possibly lead to better upkeep of the housing and public buildings they do have. When examples of order and care are found in their environment they need to be exemplified. Possibilities for using art to improve what one says about oneself, one's people, and one's neighborhood can be explored. Students' adaptations to new surroundings can be helped by using familiar ethnic symbols and styles in art form for their homes.

5. Students' stereotyped conceptions of beauty need to be enlarged. They can be shown that not only does each object they observe have an identity or name, but it also possesses visual qualities as well. They need opportunities to observe form, line, color, and texture as these vary in light and space, and the differences these qualities have upon one another in differing combinations. They need to evaluate the differences in impact, different combinations have on themselves.

6. To enable students ti improve their own environment, and to be discriminating under the influence of mass media, they need to be taught some of the elementary concepts of design. We cannot assume that they know the difference between order and disorder or about the effects these have on them. Many simplified ways of creating order should be explored with color, size, shape, and continuity of line. When some of these have been achieved the students'

need for variation and interest can be developed. Above all, these concepts should be used in practical ways of making ugly things more pleasing and even the most drab environment more pleasant with improvised and inexpensive materials.

This technique for establishing the objectives for an art curriculum, based on a study of a particular regional segment of the economically and socially deprived is adaptable to both college and inservice art education classes in all parts of the country. In many cases it can be related to courses in the social, psychological, and philosophical foundations of education and to social welfare and guidance work of the school districts.

VI. Summary

An attempt has been made in this chapter to investigate the complex cultural differences found among the children of the economically deprived in the United States and to suggest some possible objectives in art to help them deal with their environment. No people of any background or economic level can be dealt with as a homogeneous group, but in the degree that they share poverty, inadequate housing, lack of education and opportunity, in this degree some overall directives for art can be developed. In schools or classes where specific ethnic groups predominate the cultural variation of that group must be examined.

The problem posed by the economically and socially deprived minorities within our presently affluent society are most serious and if the thesis presented here is valid, demands that the potential of art for its alleviation be examined extensively. It would seem imperative that the study of the role of art in all the education of these children and youth be included in all teacher training in art and in the art curriculum planning of our city schools.

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